

COLL. CAT

WIS

28

AN 7

N 9

New York.

✓  
Nursery & Childs Hosp  
N. Y. C.



110 West 34th Street, {  
New York, Oct. 1870. }

MRS. R. H. LEMIST, SECRETARY BOARD OF MANAGERS, NURSERY AND CHILD'S HOSPITAL, N. Y.

*Madam!*

I take the liberty of addressing you, and the Board of Lady Managers of the Nursery and Child's Hospital through you, for the first time during my connection with the Institution. As, in all probability, it will be also the last time I have the honor of urging my claims on your attention for a short while, the more so, as I am the oldest member of your visiting staff, and have been connected with the Nursery for little less than a decennium.

During this period I have attended to my duties punctually and to the best of my ability. I have, in so doing, looked neither to the right nor the left, expecting others to take care of their departments as I did of mine. For a long time I have not known whether I have made friends or enemies, taking the first as self-understood and not fearing the latter. At all events, I have not made any personal acquaintances amongst the lady managers, except that of your first directress. I believe I know the persons of none of the lady managers, and there will be many of the ladies who have never seen me. Thus, while not understanding why I should have enemies amongst them I admit that there is no reason why I should have friends or backers.

As, then, I am not known, personally to the ladies, I add a few words with regard to my connection with your Institution. In your annual report of 1862, I was mentioned as a welcome addition to your staff, because of my having given especial attention to the study of the diseases of infancy and childhood. The fact is, that the place vacated by Dr. Watts, was offered me by the gentlemen of the medical Board, who were just as willing to accept me as I was eager to accept the place. I have filled it since with the personal profit obtained by every careful observer in any public institution, and with the endeavor to let the institution profit by my former and simultaneous experience and studies.

As far as I am aware, I am, with the exception of my friend and colleague, Prof. G. T. Elliott, M. D., the only one through whom the Nursery and Child's Hospital has had a chance to appear before a scientific public. I have, while serving the institution, attempted to let the medical public profit by my opportunities. Occasional articles, by myself, and by house physicians, in scientific journals, prove that I was aware of my duties to the profession, as well as to the institution. In the eyes of the profession, a gentleman connected with a public institution, and not serving the common cause of study and progress, neglects his opportunity to prove his ability for observation and teaching, and for serving the patients entrusted to his care. Thus, also, all over the world, the public institutions crave clinical instruction as a preference, both, managers and patients feeling more confidence in the thoroughness of the medical officers and the completeness of individual observation, when the opportunities of teaching are made available. In accordance with this universal custom and want, I have established at your Institution a clinic accessible to the profession and to the students of all the colleges of the city, both male and female, with the result of invariably punctual attendance by the very same persons. I have further given the Institution the benefit of the results of modern science, the attainments of this country and Europe, and have practiced, what the good men of the profession all over the world admit as valuable, and what I have been teaching, by writing and lecturing, for ten years and more.

Far from seeing anything objectionable in my endeavors as stated above, I deserve credit for whatever I have done in that direction, hoping the profession and the students to pardon me for having done no more. Still, I have been told that the clinic has been a very objectionable feature in the judgment of some lady managers. I can not dispute their aversion, their objection; but as it has been stated, that I, or we, harmed the children, had "no pity" on them, I assert here, in my name, and in that of my audience, that such statements are utterly false. I have been told, further, and on very good authority, that the principal objection to me, on the part of the lady managers, was my "practice;" the remedies I used, the treatment I resorted to. I was given to understand that the managers looked with horror on my therapeutics, it was rumored about town—I have proof for what I say—that my treatment killed the children; so that a

prominent *savant* and practitioner of the city had to ask, if Dr. Jacobi did not place the children on a shelf and shoot at them with pistols?

Those of the ladies who have undertaken to criticise, and to condemn the therapeutics of their medical staff, must be welcomed to their self-admiration and the smile of educated people. Probably they belong to the small number of those to whom I had occasion to repeatedly speak of the impropriety of distributing crackers and candies in wards crowded with babies and children, sick and well, at improper times, and without direction or advice. If the ladies will allow of any remark, it is this, that those who are so very prone to assume duties not their own and not within their grasp, generally neglect their own. Knowledge renders modest, and steady industry honest. Ignorance renders presumptuous, and spasmodic activity fickle and restless. If those ladies meant to criticise, they might have asked the opinion of their own medical advisers concerning my competency. They might have learned that the members of the medical board of the Nursery are, as far as pathology and therapeutics go, in all probability the superiors of some of the lady managers who collect ten-dollar contributions, attend a few monthly meetings, and sell ball tickets once a year.

Your medical Board can afford to dismiss the caviling at our therapeutics with a smile, but I have to direct the attention of your Board to a remark which has been repeatedly made in my hearing, that many of the lady managers are "homœopathically inclined," and that I was simply the first to be got rid of. As this is my last word to the Board of lady managers, I give the report for what it is worth.

In a clinical lecture delivered on January 15th, 1870, 2½ P. M. I took occasion to speak of a number of affections frequently found in public institutions such as ours. I stated that diseases were apt to run a more unfavorable course in crowded houses, and in public institutions generally, than in private residences; that diseases of infants in particular were greatly influenced by such places; that lying-in hospitals were the principal breeders of dangerous maladies; that we had been seeing a great many cases of puerperal sickness this winter, that in fact almost none of the women confined in the house had escaped sickness; that many of them had been in imminent danger of dying of endometritis and blood-poisoning, but that every one of them had been saved by disinfectant treatment; that we owed

this happy result to a great extent to the indefatigable exertions of the assistant, Dr. Kitchen, and the uterine injections made by him. That a frequent disease amongst infants in lying-in hospitals was erysipelas, that in fact many cases of this disease had to be considered as of puerperal origin; and that it was a remarkable fact that all of our cases of erysipelas in infants had occurred in the new and large house, containing the lying-in wards, in spite of better ventilation, etc. while not a single one (except one transferred from that house) occurred in the old house which was, as I expressed myself, an "abomination" in a sanitary point of view.

That the old house is the very worst refuge for infants, well or sick, is well known to every one of your medical staff, to every body in fact, who visited it with anything like attention.

The remarks I made were not at all destined to be kept secret; they are scientific facts which students ought to learn and physicians to know, and managers to take into consideration. They were stated *sine ira et studio*, without shrinking and without my ever expecting them to give rise to any commotion.

During the following week I received a number of intimations that my lecture had been overheard—every door being open—and reported to higher quarters, and that a great deal of discomfort, or discontent had been the result. In fact it was then already intimated to me that the lady managers were absolutely dissatisfied with me and would try everything in their power to get rid of me. On January 20th the house-physician handed me a letter directed to me, which reads as follows:

*"Jan. 20.—To the attending physicians:*

*"The managers of the Nursery request that no operation be performed without a consultation with the Board of Physicians.*

MARY A. DU BOIS,

*First Directress."*

Written at such a time as this, I could not but suppose that a personal feeling against me individually had dictated it. Very few, and no important, operations had, to my knowledge, ever been made except by me; in fact there was seldom a term of duty of mine without an operation. They seldom took place without the knowledge of my colleagues, and usually after formal consultations. Previous to the time of which I speak there was a little girl in the institution afflicted

with hip-disease in the third stage and at the same time with chronic dysentery. The former was fatal in itself unless the diseased bones were exsected; but I had to wait for an improvement in the second disease. The little girl, however, grew feebler and in order to give her the slight chances she might have, to escape certain death, I performed the operation. A fortnight afterwards she died of exhaustion. This case had often been seen by some of my colleagues and been the subject of our conversation, but I had omitted to call a formal consultation.

The above short letter was written a few days after the lecture alluded to. My answer follows below. I may state at the same time, that in that very week an infant was presented for admission. It was in good health, but had congenital club-foot. When Dr. O'Connor, then house-physician, stated that this ailment was no objection to its admission, because "Dr. Jacobi could very easily do that"—the infant was instantly refused admission. My letter was directed to the house-physician, by whom Mrs. Du Bois' letter was handed to me, and reads as follows:

DEAR DOCTOR:—I herewith return the enclosed letter, and cannot do anything in the matter. Neither the lady managers nor myself can with a stroke of the pen change the rules of the Institution. Medical matters belong to the medical Board. Thus this letter ought to be addressed to the medical Board, if at all. I confess, though, that the lady managers have conferred a great honor upon me by addressing their letter to me, personally. But you perceive at once, that although I am the oldest member of the attending staff, I cannot impose any duties upon my colleagues, or change the laws and rules of the Institution. Please to return the letter to the lady managers, with my regards and thanks for their kind favor, or place it at their disposal.

They will probably think of sending it to the secretary of the Board, for the consideration of the Board.

Yours very truly,

Dr. A. JACOBI.

On January 22nd, before my lecture at the Nursery, Dr. Delafield, the president of the medical Board, called on me, at my residence, with the following statement: The ladies were highly displeased with me. They had been so for a long time, but, at present they had very serious accusations against me. It was his duty to ask me about such accusations as the following:

1st.—I had struck an inmate, a woman, in the Institution ;

2nd.—I had performed operations without consultation ;

3rd.—I had publicly spoken disparagingly and untruly of the Institution ;

4th.—I had ordered reporters for that afternoon's lecture to take down such remarks, as I should utter to the discredit of the Institution, for the secular press.

My answer was, that

No. 1 was an unmitigated falsehood ;

No. 2. I should be guided by the directions of the Medical Board ;

No. 3. was untrue : I told Dr. Delafield what I had stated in my previous lecture ;

No. 4 was an invention of somebody, but I had been told by the house physician that Mrs. Du Bois, the directress of the Institution, had spoken of engaging reporters for my next lecture, for the purpose of learning literally what I should say, and that I should have no objection to such a proceeding of hers, because it was evident that she had nothing against me but misconstrued or malicious reports.

At the same time I communicated to the Doctor the fact that, to my certain knowledge, a few of the ladies, particularly Mrs. Du Bois, and a few others, unknown to me personally, who were pointed out as my special enemies, went about amongst the inmates of the Institution inquiring of the women what complaints, accusations, etc., they had to express against Dr. Jacobi.

I also communicated to the Doctor the fact that Mrs. Du Bois, the first directress, had been very anxious to learn the reasons of my resignation of the chair of diseases of children in the University, the previous year, and whether that resignation had not been compulsory, etc.

All these communications of mine appeared to surprise the President of the medical Board. But the remarks he made concerning the proceeding of the ladies I omit to repeat as not absolutely necessary to the elucidation of the further history.

That very afternoon, while I was lecturing, Mrs. DuBois and 2 other lady managers appeared on the gallery of the school room in which my audience was assembled. After I had finished I related the above facts, and repeated my remarks of last week. On my questioning the audience in presence of the ladies seated on the gallery, whether

these, and these alone, were my remarks of last week, the ladies and gentlemen answered affirmatively and emphatically that they were.

A few minutes before the meeting of the medical Board, held at the residence of the President of the Board, on the 31st of January 1870, the President, Dr. Delafield, showed me the following letter :

*Dr. J. J. HULL, Secretary of Board of Physicians of Nursery and Child's Hospital.*

At a meeting of the Board of Managers of Nursery and Child's Hospital, held at the Institution, Jan. 27th, 1870, the following resolution was passed.

"In the judgment of those who have the welfare of the Institution at heart, it would be expedient to make a change in the medical Board. Therefore the Board of Physicians are respectfully requested to make such arrangements as to carry out the unanimous desire of the ladies, that the position now occupied by Dr. Jacobi, shall be vacated, and filled by the medical Board, at the time of the annual meeting.

By order of the Board of Managers of Nursery and Child's Hospital,  
R. H. LEMIST, *Secretary.*

NEW YORK, Jan 28th, 1870."

Dr. Delafield asked me if I should not prefer to resign, as the enmity of the Ladies was uncontrollable ; that it was true they could not remove me with the present constitution of the Nursery and Child's Hospital, but that they had the power of altering the constitution; that, if I refused to resign, they would certainly alter that constitution, and, after so doing, in appointing a medical staff would surely drop me. If I meant to resign, he would not lay the letter before the Board at all.

My answer was: That the letter was to be presented to the Medical Board. That I wanted the Board to take notice of the fact: that not a single reason was given by the ladies for their desire to dispose of me in that summary manner in remuneration of my services of eight years, nor for the accusations and slanders spread amongst the public by members of the Board. That I should not resign in order to compel the lady managers to come forward with their accusations, so that I could meet them face to face, and that I could not but consider this proceeding as unjustifiably wrong and childish: first in

trying to harm and punish me without stating a cause; second, in having such a low opinion of the medical Board as to express such a request without giving any reason for it. Finally that I was not in the habit of getting frightened at ill will, malice, and wanton persecution.

The letter was therefore read to the medical Board, and it was resolved, on motion of Dr. Reynolds.

“That the Lady Managers of the Nursery and Child’s Hospital be respectfully requested to transmit to the Medical Board any accusations they may have against Dr. Jacobi, as they would be unable to take any action in the premises until such accusations were made.”

This resolution was carried; but afterwards, with my approval, replaced by the following:

“That the Secretary be requested to notify the Board of Managers that Dr. Elliott was appointed a committee of conference in the matter, and that they are respectfully requested to notify Dr. Elliott where he could meet with a committee of the Board of Managers.”

In the opinion of the other members of the Medical Board, Dr. Elliott was to see the ladies, or a committee of them, for the purpose of inquiry and conciliation. As I was the implicated party, I did not object to whatever course my colleagues saw fit to take; under other circumstances, in the interest of a colleague and the dignity of the medical board, I would have acted differently. I would have answered that letter of the Board of Managers, in this spirit: that it was unfair to be plaintiff and judge in one person, to condemn and punish without stating the offence, or without giving the accused party a chance to justify himself, that therefore the manner in which some of the ladies meant to deal with a member of the medical staff, who had served them eight years punctually, successfully and gratuitously, was, at least, inconsiderate and ungrateful; that the letter addressed to the Medical Board, requesting removal without cause, was an insult, and that the dignity of the Board would not allow one of their members to be so treated, and that the threat to change the Constitution and appoint the Medical Board from year to year, was an insult to which no respectable physician would submit.

Thus I should have answered, if I could have been anything but a passive listener; the more so, as all those facts enumerated above, were before me and my colleagues. But there were more. About that very time it got known, that some of the ladies were very busy

about town spreading reports . . . they meant to be damaging to my reputation as a physician . . . gentleman. Mrs. L. said, my treatment was an outrage ; others . . . that I beat the women or one woman ; others, I blasphemed Providence ; others, I used low and coarse language, which, I will not state here, but which, I am told, was frequently repeated by the " ladies."

At the same time, let me state that all my endeavors to get at the cause of the trouble, at direct accusations, were always baffled by silence. My colleagues, as well as myself, tried to get some positive answer to our inquiries. The answer was always that my guilt was positive ; but that out of kindness, and out of regard to my feelings, they preferred to keep silent, at least to us, while the public was entertained with the raciest remarks of these " ladies." I am almost sorry they had selected a *gentleman* as the subject of their persecution. As it was, I heard a great many things, and took the necessary notes ; but when I stated I should make the necessary use of these communications, I was advised that I must not, as they had been confidential. Thus I have, until the present time, been deprived even of the protection the law gives against malicious slander, I should have desired those ladies to attempt to verify the vile remarks peddled about town, and at the same time compelled them, before a court of justice, to swear to the manner in which they obtained their information, going about the wards of the Nursey to coax smuddy stories out of the women with whom, if it was not for the purpose of vilifying a hated member of the staff, they would have disdained to have been found in any intimate connection, and to make them testify, that they did not perhaps as much as know me personally. As matters stood, I was condemned to silence.

The only person connected with the Institution who has at one time given me a straightward answer to my inquiries, has been Mrs. Polman. I give her credit for that much, the more readily as I cannot say anything else in her favor. I believe her the wrong person in her place. She has done the institution a great deal of harm by meddling with other people's business, by interfering with the physicians, countermanding orders, making diagnoses in the wards, calling an attending physician a " youngster," publicly ; exerting an undue influence over the managers ; by doing as much as she could to render the institution unpopular. Mrs. Polman has admitted to me that there was

a report that I struck a woman. Finally, the testimony was, that "Dr. Jacobi was so excited, he *almost* struck her." The woman alluded to had a child suffering from croup. To give the baby what little chance of life there might be, I proposed Tracheotomy, and was refused. I urged strenuously, and was refused. "Dr. Jacobi got so excited, he *almost* struck her." I ask the ladies, have they seen a child getting strangled with membranous croup? and can they understand the "excitement" of a physician who is refused the only possibility of saving its life? I hope and trust they can.

Or do you find it so outrageous, that I said to the house-physician, "You see, Doctor, how easy it is to have children and how difficult to save one!"

And *must* I repeat here, in the hearing of ladies who have not forgotten to blush, what some of the Board of Managers and the matron of the Nursery have stated more than once? The woman said: I do not want my child killed by an operation.

The doctor said: "Never you mind; you can make another one in five minutes."

I beg the pardon of the lady Secretary to whom I have to make this statement, and those ladies also who never heard it and never repeated it.

Another person, under similar circumstances, did not consent to the operation which was held out to her as the last possible chance of her baby, for the alleged reason that "its father did not do anything for the child, took no trouble,—why should she? She would rather see it in the hands of Providence." Must I tell the ladies of the bewilderment and anger of the physician who comes in contact with such brutality? But it was the doctor who "blasphemed Providence."

And surely, it was not worth while to inquire into the truthfulness of malicious inventions. They were a commodious handle to the whip to be applied. Mrs. P., and Mrs. D., and the highly Christian-like Mrs. A., whom I have never seen but who is described as my indefatigable *Persecutrix* wanted to get rid of me, that is all.

"Regard for Dr. Jacobi's feelings" and "kindness" were the causes why slander went about town, and I was refused an honest answer to my questions.

---

Permit me, please, to continue my narrative.

The remarks made by members of the Medical Board, and by members of the profession who gathered round of the facts were not very complimentary to the ladies. As far as the Board was concerned, I should have liked to hear a publicly spoken word instead of "confidential" remarks. With some of these I could not agree, for I so little believe in differences of color, country, or sex, as the measurements of rights or abilities, as to have sacrificed a part of my life in the interest of my principles.

Therefore I could not agree with those who declared they would "not serve under a Board of women," etc., that "women would not be guided by the merits of a case, nor by facts, but by their momentary and personal feelings," etc. If the Board of Managers had been men, I should certainly not have acted differently from what I did: although I admit that a body of men would be likely to try a case before judging it, and certainly not be influenced, blindly, by the insinuation of a subordinate or the passion of a director, wilful and not used to any resistance whatsoever.

I had been told that if I refused to resign, the *modus operandi* of the ladies would be to change that article of the constitution which empowers the Medical Board to attend to their own business, fill vacancies, etc. It was stated they would change that article so as to reduce the time of service of the attending physicians to *one year*, and to get enabled, if desirable, to change their medical attendants *ad libitum*.

I felt that no respectable physician would crave a place on such conditions, and the institution would not be able of ever getting anybody but a sycophant or an ignoramus on such terms: but I knew that the first step in this direction would be made against, and its influence fall upon my colleagues, for the admission of every one of whom I had voted in the course of half a dozen years and with whom I was on the terms of good fellowship. Thus, after considering the matter for a little while, and partly influenced by conversations with one or two of my colleagues, or by friends urging such a course, I authorized Dr. Hull to make a statement to the ladies, which is set forth in the minutes of the meeting of the Medical Board, held at the residence of Dr. Delatfield, on March 31st 1870: "In the absence of Dr. Elliot the special committee in the affair between Dr. Jacobi and the Board of Managers, Dr. Hull reported that the trouble has been satisfactorily

settled by the promise of Dr. Jacobi to send in his resignation as attending physician some time in the course of the year, the lady managers dropping the whole matter. He had notified Dr. Elliott of the fact and it was accepted by him."

In giving and after having given that promise, I felt serious misgivings, I confess. I knew that the lady managers who were strangers to the whole outrage of spreading calumnies and refusing to state an offence of coaxing, suggested accusations out of the low women in the Institution, of repeating stories invented by a foul imagination and uttered by foul mouths, and those in the public who had been regaled with the *piquant* reports, would be apt to believe that these reports were correct. There is not a member of the profession, except those who do not know me, who might believe me ungentlemanly being under the impression that their informants were either gentlemen or ladies. But my disgust with the whole proceeding was such that I felt as if I could not but lose by keeping up my connection with the institution, and with those who made it their business to traduce me. Moreover, I felt that my giving way under the pressure of the threat of a change in the constitution would give the lady managers, or a few ring-leaders, just the very power which I thought they ought not to possess, if the position of their attending staff was to remain anything like honorable. Further I felt as if the Medical Board might have upheld my claims to hear the accusations, learn facts, correct mistakes, refute slanders, and convince the slanderers of their guilt before their colleagues in the Board. More: I was slighted by a colleague a few days after the storm against me broke out, by not being notified of a consultaion to be held at the Institution. I felt offended, naturally, but the excuse tendered by the gentleman publicly, has long removed my doubt as to the constant friendliness, if not manliness, of his conduct towards me.

Still, I had given the promise, and meant to keep it.

When I did give it, I expressed the hope, that, if in a number of months I should inquire for the cause of all the persecution let loose against me, after the ladies who were drawn unwillingly into it, would have reconsidered their course, an answer would be given.

Unfortunately, I had no right to inquire of any of the ladies but the first directress, whom I suspected, and still suspect, to be the chief originator, under and with Mrs. Polman and one or two others

of the whole proceedings. My husband had made such statements to me as she thought proper, and Mrs. Du Bois, I hoped, would not refuse an answer, if I waited long enough to give her time for deliberation. Accordingly, after a number of months I sent to her address the following letter :

110 WEST 34th STREET, NEW YORK, }  
SEPT. 10th, 1870. }

*Mrs. A. Du Bois, Directress Nursery and Child's Hospital.*

DEAR MADAM :

I feel obliged, and therefore take the liberty to again allude in a few lines to the unpleasant occurrences of last winter. I have long ago been acquainted with my unpopularity amongst some of the lady managers of your institution, yourself included, although its interests have always been as dear to me as to any member of your medical staff. Still, I do not feel as if I should like to leave the Institution without some palpable reason being assigned for your desire to have my connection with the Nursery severed.

The request of the Board of Managers to remove Dr. Jacobi was not accompanied with any statements of the reasons for such request ; and therefore gave rise to a painful surprise amongst all of us who were present at the meeting of the Medical Board.

You are aware that I have declared myself very willing to satisfy your earnest desires that I should vacate my position as a member of your medical staff, at a suitable time. However, I owe it to myself at present, when I think that a number of months may have healed any sore feeling, some few of the lady managers may harbor against me, to inquire which have been the actual reasons why such an unprecedented request should have been sent to the Medical Board. As none were stated, as they were in fact diligently withheld, or refused, as moreover this remarkable proceeding was instituted against a member of the profession whom even a yearly report of the managers was glad to count amongst its Medical Board, I think I have good cause now to inquire after some explanation of the remarkable manner, unheard of in any public institution, by which I was to be forced to leave the Nursery. I prefer this direct inquiry to subterfuges and clandestine machinations

I do not hesitate to presume that you will honor this request of mine with just such a direct and straightforward answer.

Yours very respectfully,

A. JACOBI, M. D.

The answer I received reads as follows :

West New Brighton, L. I., Sept. 15th, 1870.

DEAR SIR :

I received your note last evening. A Fair for the benefit of our church at present occupies every moment. I will reply to your letter in a friendly and "straightforward" manner if you will consider it a confidential communication, otherwise I must make your note an official one and lay it before our Board at its next meeting. I much prefer the former course from motives of kindness and regard to your feelings.

Please let me hear from you on receipt of this.

Yours Truly,

MARY A. DU BOIS, West New Brighton.

*A. Jacobi, M. D*

Let us consider.

After I have served eight years, a request is sent to the Board of Physicians to vacate my place. No reasons are given.

The question after such reasons is asked by me. No answer.

The Medical Board asks for reasons. No answer.

The only answer is, that no answer will be forthcoming out of regard for Dr. Jacobi, out of kind feeling for Dr. Jacobi, the same Dr. Jacobi who is so very anxious to hear the points of accusation.

Meanwhile slander is rife, whisper is busy. Calumnies, such as Mrs. Polman communicated to me, based on inventions and the high pressure exercised upon the females in the institution, who feel greatly exalted at the inquisitive friendliness and the coaxing suavity of their lady superiors, accusations such as in every Court of Justice would be acknowledged as libel, are carried about town. The only one who is not allowed to hear them, unless "confidentially," is myself.

I wait patiently all summer. I ask again in a polite manner for information.

Again the answer is, from the directress of the institution in and

against which I have been requested to speak, is sinning, that she will speak out confidentially. If I do not promise to consider the communication as confidential, that is, if I do not promise to pocket every insult she will pour down upon me in silence, and without defence, she will not speak, but lay my request before the Board.

Now, I ask the Board of Ladies: *Did they ever learn I wanted to know the accusations raised against me? Were they ever told that I was constantly refused an answer?*

I have no dealings with Mrs. Du Bois personally. I do not require her regards nor her kind feelings. I want justice to myself, and the Board of Ladies who, to judge from the words of the last letter of Mrs. Du Bois, have never known what was going on. I have applied to Mrs. Du Bois because I knew of no better way to apply to the Board. If Mrs. Du Bois promises, or threatens, to lay my letter before the Board, for an answer to be given, it is just what I have been waiting for all the time. I believe I know now *that Mrs. Du Bois, and a few of her colleagues, have acted without the knowledge and therefore without the approval of the Board in the whole matter.*

If such is the case, you have another proof of the danger of absence of control, the curse of monarchy, and the blessing in spite of many inconveniences of rotation in office. I do not desire any of Mrs. Du Bois' confidence. She has, in her letter, promised to lay the matter before the Board, and I shall insist upon its being done. And the ladies will pardon me for giving them the trouble of attending to a business which, it appears, a few have taken the liberty of deciding in their own way. But I owe it to myself to say, that I cannot feel satisfied with another attempt, like that in Mrs. Du Bois' letter, at waving a direct answer, and that I take that very letter, that very offer of her confidence and kind regard for my feelings, as just as many insults. In order not to be misunderstood again, and to give the ladies a chance to fully speak their minds, and, if they choose, to let me hear what they have to say, and this time not "confidentially," I take back my promise, given in good faith, but shaken by Mrs. Du Bois' evading letter, my promise to send in my resignation in the course of this year.

Any conclusion the ladies will arrive at, after mature deliberation, will be welcome to me.

I shall see that every lady manager will be supplied with a copy of

this letter. I shall also make it known to every one of my colleagues in the Institution. Further it will not go, unless I am compelled to give it further publicity.

Let the ladies not believe that I think for a moment of the possibility of my continuing any connection with the institution. That is out of the question. But I want no more secrecy, subterfuge, or machination. I want to see the enemy who meant to stab me from the dark.

Afterwards, when my place will be vacated by some means or other, the question of *its* being filled again can easily be settled. Long before my resignation could be expected, Mrs. Du Bois has stated as early as half a year ago, that a great many applications for my place had come in, and that a certain medical man had a large number of recommendations for that purpose.

It appears that the honorable silence which was to be kept about the matter has not been well preserved. At all events I have good reason to answer such action as bad faith. I make use of the strong expression knowingly and intentionally, desiring from all my heart in the interest of the Institution, that it was not necessary that a stronger term should be applied to some of the actions of the same functionary.

I shall return to that subject.

---

Meanwhile, I beg the ladies, to follow me through some statistics.

By authority and order of the Commissioners of Charities and Correction, I have written "a report on the raising and education of abandoned children in Europe, with statistics and general remarks on that subject." It has been published in the minutes of the Commissioners, and republished in pamphlet form, for limited circulation amongst medical men and journals, and some of the Managers or Trustees of a few public institutions. On p. 35 I speak of the Nursery and Child's Hospital as follows:

"The *Nursery and Child's Hospital*, N. Y., under the management of thirty five estimable ladies of the city, in which the infants are fed half on breast milk, half on well selected artificial food, a mixture so frequently and advantageously used in private families,

abits in the latest records than in the preceding facts. I take the liberty of adding at once, that I make these limited statistics only, because up to March, 1870, the records have not been well kept. Since that period they have been kept regularly, as I, being one of the medical staff of the institution, know from personal experience. There have been from March 2d to May 31st, 97 admissions: of them 20 were discharged, and 10 died.

The admitted nurslings were by no means new born: in fact, very few belong to that category. Eighty of these admitted children had a total age of 367 months, averaging 4.5 months for each child at the date of admission. Seventeen of the admitted children were two years and over, up to ten; altogether there is a total number of 84 years for 17 children over 2 years, that is an average age of 5 years. Of these 17, being of an age where the rates of mortality are always low, none died. Thus we have 10 deaths in 80 infants with an average age of 4.5 months at the date of admission, within a single quarter of a year. Further, of these 80 infants (from two days to two years old), admitted during these ninety days, 20 were discharged. The shortest stay was one day, the longest 68 days. The total days of these infants in the institution was 324 days for 20 inmates, that is, discharges took place, or were taken, in 20 cases out of 80, after an average stay of 16.2 days in the Nursery. Thus there are 10 deaths in 60 children of an average age of 4.5 months at the date of admission, within the three months following their admission. The average age is a little higher, because most of the infants who were discharged were very young, and have been counted in the grand total of ages. Now, if we grant that March and one-half of April are unfavorable months, we have to admit that May is favorable to health, that the winter months from Decem. to Feb. are just as untoward as March, and that the heated term of the summer is surely still more dangerous. Thus we may safely assume that the rate of general yearly mortality in the Nursery is certainly about the same as in the mentioned quarter of March, April and May, therefore the mortality through the year would amount to 40 out of the number of 60, or if we mean to count the infants that got their discharges after sixteen days' stay in the Institution, out of 80 children who were admitted at an average age of 4.5 months. I prefer this latter figure for the following reasons of both justice and charity. The fifty children remaining, having grown a quarter of a year older, meanwhile, would, in the second, third, and fourth quarters exhibit a smaller rate of mortality, while those newly admitted would yield the very same mortality we figured above. Thus we can afford to count those 20 discharged ones with the rest. If in future the records will be kept as fairly as in the last few months, we shall have facts instead of estimates.

Now, then, there are ten deaths quarterly in 80 children, each one 4.5 months old at the date of admission. Grand total of 50 per cent.

deaths yearly of children of 4-5 months and upwards to two years.

The mortality of the infants born alive, from the date of birth to the fifth month, is larger than that of infants between that age and two years. Of three infants who die before the termination of their first year, two are less than five months old, and one is between five and twelve; and of thirty-one who die before the end of their second year, twenty-six have not reached the end of the first, and but five die between their first and second year. Thus, of the above 50 per cent., 8 would belong to the second year, 42 to the first, and it appears that the mortality of the nursery, if all of the admitted infants were new born instead of being 4-5 months, would be so appalling that I am glad I am not required to state its exact figures. The worst figures of the European foundling hells of former centuries are not more fearful than ours, and although being an officer of that institution myself, and believing that I and all the rest of us have conscientiously tried to do our duties, I cannot but testify and bow down to the truth, that in spite of all the efforts of the medical staff and the pain takings of kind-hearted and self-sacrificing ladies, the probability of the lives of children entrusted to a public institution is very slim indeed. The younger the children, and the larger the institution—the surer is death. Every story added to an edifice which is meant to be a temple of love, is an additional hecatomb of the innocents. Modern civilization, planning for the best, but mistaken about the means, has succeeded in out heroding Herod.

The facts are sufficient to justify the abrogation of large institutions designed for the raising of young infants. The facts appear to show besides, that older children, (not a single death occurring in 17 of an average age of five years,) bear up easily under the same circumstances that are a source of death to the infants.

In the same institution, viz., the Nursery and Child's Hospital, there were 41 births from the first day of January to the last of May. Of the infants, 4 were still born, 6 died, 23 were discharged, 8 remained in the institution to first of July. Those remaining in the institution have all been born in April and May, with a single exception, every one born previous to March 31st having left the institution, or died. The 23 discharged infants were in the institution 609 days, each averaging 26.5 days. Those who were born and died in the institution, lived altogether 274 days, an average life of 45.6 days in the institution. Those 8 who remained in the institution on July 1st had lived, *in toto*, 340 days, an average of 40.25 for each of the eight. Thus, their average ages was not yet the average age at which those six died, nor were the ages of the discharged twenty-three much more than one half of the average ages of those who died. The naked fact is, that of 37 infants counting the discharged, and the remaining, 6 died. After the last of these, who died on May 11th, 7 were born; thus in reality, the six deaths occurred in thirty inmates,

...ge majority of whom we have seen the deaths of those who perish before the age of 20, of children born alive, in the private families. Many of the new born infants are abandoned by their mothers at least for some time: when difficulties arise, they are, as a rule, more readily removed in an institution, where there is always some supply of breast milk, than in private families.

Now, if I add the fact, that the women are well kept, the food is good and plenty, medical attendance is efficient, and the whole institution is under the assiduous management of thirty five ladies belonging to the best Society of New York City, I believe I am justified in concluding that a large institution is the very place a young infant ought to be kept out of. For the poor tenements of our working classes yield better results in their raising of infants, than the large institutions the city might be proud of.

From the tenor of the above extract the ladies will perceive that I knew how to disregard the personal insults heaped upon me. The appalling figures I have recapitulated for you will show what I meant to prove, after having studied an immense literature and spent some months in Europe for no other purpose than to investigate the methods of raising healthy infants, viz. that large institutions will destroy instead of saving, infant life. At the same time I have been very careful not to allude to the personalities, insults and persecutions to which I have been exposed, and have certainly given no less credit to the ladies. I believe I have given more than they deserve. For their results are fearful. My favorable expressions have ever been repeated in medical journals, and there has been some danger of considering the managers of the nursery as paragon managers from the very manner in which I have expressed myself concerning their work.

Before going on, I direct the attention of the ladies to an important fact. The desire of doing good, and to have one's doings fully appreciated, is apt to lead to self-love and self-admiration. Moreover, we are apt to believe what we wish. Thus the results of public institutions are generally over-estimated by the leaders and their immediate subordinates. It is so on a large scale in great political organization, on a small scale in little commonwealths, or in small institutions. The annual reports of your Institution are an excellent example. Look at your last report of March 1st, 1870.

"The whole number of cases of disease treated within the Hospital, from March 1st, 1869, to March 1st, 1870, has been 2,000, not including infants suffering from those slight ailments which last but a day or two. Of this number, 173 have died: 1740 recovered, and 87 remain now under treatment."

The same report states that, within that same year, 371 children have been admitted. As there were "2000 cases of disease, not including slight ailments which last but a day or two," every child in

the Institution must have suffered from 5 severe diseases during the year. Almost none of the children is admitted in ill-health. If you will take the trouble of looking over the record of admission, and the affections, if any there are, with which the infants are brought in, you will find a few cases of sore head, sore mouth, sore eye lids, and nothing else.

But 2 sick children were admitted all summer, 1 of whom died. All of those are ailments of which no child is apt to die. What is left, then, ought to conclude that either that statement is greatly exaggerated, that is, not true; or that the Institution is such as to give a healthy child five severe diseases annually, just to prove the efficiency of the management and of the doctors.

The facts, ladies, are just the reverse of the above statement. Medical men like to overdraw the picture of their efficiency sometimes as much as managers. If the ladies will look over the register of "2000 diseases," which are "not slight ailments," they will find many, many hundreds of nothings filling the pages of the books. There are mustard-plasters by the score, every one a great case, and constipation, with the remarkable soap and water injection treatment by the hundreds. A mother who will give her baby an injection once a day, for 3 months, as many a one will do without thinking that she has just performed a wonderful feat worth recording officially and printing in an annual report, cures 91 such diseases as we have in our Nursery registers.

But there is the sad fact staring you in the face, that you have admitted 371 children, and have buried 173. If you look close you will find besides that amongst these 173, there are very few which belong to the results of the 100 confinements that have taken place in the same year. These are figures, and they do not exaggerate, flatter or lie. If you will look over the records, and see how many of the 371 are over 2 or 3 years—a period of lower mortality—you will admit that your mortality amongst the children under 2 years is nothing you will ever be proud of. And you will no longer believe that "the mortality of the Nursery and Child's Hospital has been surprisingly small," and perhaps be unwilling to assume the responsibility of the sentence: "which pleasing fact is due to the general good management and excellent diet of the children." (v. Rep. 1870, p. 14.)

Again I refer the Ladies to the books.

There are from March 1st, to October 13th, 204 admissions and 82 deaths. Of these I deduct 10 who had been born in the Institution, but add 16 who died in the Country Hospital at Staten Island. Total, 204 admissions and 88 deaths in the Nursery and Child's Hospital, from March 1st, to the middle of October. This mortality inside the Institution is the more fearful, as out of 101 admissions, between June 1st, and October 1st, 29 were from 2 to 13 years old, while the average age of those 101 admissions was more than twenty months.

and as a great many infants arrived from the Institution before they succumb under the "good management and careful diet" of the report. Thus, of the 101 admitted, 77 were removed after they had been in the Institution an average of but 204 days, leaving behind them but 74 of the 101, 6 of whom were over 2 years of age and beyond the principal ravages of fatal disease. There are from June 1st to September 30th, 33 deaths on the records—the Staten Island cases not included. 27 children were discharged and 29 admitted at the age from 2 to 13 years. Thus you have 49 deaths, *i. e.* about as many, as children under two years had been admitted. 207 44

Let me add another fact, which occurred after my term of service, and after the lecture of January 1870, above alluded to. From January to July, 1870, there were 75 confinements in the Institution, and from February to July, there were 6 deaths amongst the confined women. Again, no special reason for self-congratulation.

In connection with these facts I feel compelled to attend to a very painful duty. For the information of those Ladies who are not well acquainted with the workings of the Nursery and Child's Hospital, I shall first state that during that during the course of last summer it was ordered that the house physician should no longer prepare the monthly reports for the meetings of the Lady Managers, but that the attending physician was to be entrusted with that duty.

This arrangement is anomalous in itself.

The only person who can attend to that duty, is in reality the house physician, who is in possession of the records, and much better posted than any attending physician, on the affairs of the Institution.

But it so happened that unpleasant occurrences took place between the several house physicians on one side, and the matron and directress on the other; and I admit that it is not always agreeable to hear the truth at unpleasant times and before the whole audience of lady managers. In no public Institution is the attending physician the author of the monthly report. He has to rely, if he undertakes to make it, on the statements and records of his house staff.

The first monthly report under the new rule, the attending physician not objecting, was sent in by Dr Hull. It so happened that Dr. J. J. Hull as most of the lady managers may know, is a son-in-law of Mrs. Du Bois, your first directress. I further understand, that Dr. Delafield, the president of the Medical Board, is the brother of your directress. Dr. Hull's report was read before the Board of Managers, September 29th 1870, duly appreciated, I have been told, and greatly eulogized, and Mrs. DuBois declared, it ought to be published.

It was published in the *N. Y. Evening Express*, and reads as follows, with the accompanying editorial (?) remarks:

LADIES—I have the honor to submit the following as my report of service during the months of August and September, 1870:

Number of new cases since Aug. 1.....	238
"    of births.....	15
"    of deaths.....	5
Children under medical treatment Sept. 29, 1870.....	107
The causes of deaths have been—	
Pneumonia.....	1
Pneumonia and Diarrhœa.....	1
Collapse of Lung.....	1
Entero Colitis.....	1
Cholera Infantum.....	1
<hr/>	
Total.....	5

There have been a few cases of scarlet fever, but they have been of a mild type, and have made satisfactory recoveries.

It is extremely gratifying to observe how very small the mortality has been during the months mentioned, indeed, during the entire summer. This is in a measure due to the great assistance we have had from the Country Hospital, to which we have been able to send many of the more delicate children, an inestimable advantage in such a severe summer as we have passed through. Much, however, has also been due to the excellent and improved condition of the city buildings, and to the assiduous attentions of the House Staff.

Very respectfully,  
N. Y. Sept. 29th, 1870.

J. J. HULL.  
*Attending Physician.*

We have read this report with equal surprise and pleasure, for the general complaints throughout the Summer of infant mortality among the rich and prosperous, led us to suppose that in an institution almost entirely of infants, and many taken in when apparently dying, the mortality must have been fearful. But we have observed that every year the experience and zeal of the managers and physicians of the Nursery and Child's Hospital have materially diminished infant mortality. The success of the Country Hospital, on Staten Island, is assured, and we congratulate those interested in it, and wish them God-speed. The saving of infant life, through human agency, under Providence, has, indeed, been wonderful.

The ladies will perceive at once that the "238 new cases" of the report are of the soap and water, mustard plaster, and castor oil kind, to which allusion has been made above. All the figures are the house physician's, the accompanying theory, "which ought to be published," is Dr. J. J. Hull's. He says the mortality was small during the entire Summer, which is extremely gratifying to observe (from the above figures, certainly). This small mortality is due "to the inestimable advantage proffered by the Country Hospital to which many of the most delicate children were sent; second, to the improved condition of the city buildings, (when I stated they were deficient, I committed a crime punishable with expulsion); and third, to the assiduous atten-

tions of the house-staff, (whose services are so highly appreciated by the first directress, that these gentlemen cannot be trusted any further with writing their monthly reports.

The ladies will certainly believe me when I say that I do not look about for occasions to say disagreeable things and for making enemies—I do not fear having enemies, no good man is without them—and it is derogatory to a man's character and dignity to be without. But still the world is too small for any man to make enemies unnecessarily; although larger and brighter for him who earns enmity for his endeavors to do right, than for him who is wrong and found out to be so. My relations with Dr. J. J. Hull have been pleasant enough: with a pitying sympathy, therefore, I declare before those ladies who have taken Dr. Hull's statements as truth, that they are invented for the purpose of being published. Dr. Hull knew that 16 children died in Staten Island, and concealed the fact from you. That he did so under pressure, is clear enough to the mind of whomsoever knows anything of the history of the Staten Island Country Hospital, to which everything, the interest of the City Nursery, health, truth and honor have been sacrificed. The Staten Island Country Hospital has been the ruin and death of the children sent out there. Look at the books (if they are well kept); 16 are admitted by the Directors to have died there; they went out well, and died, and those who returned to the city came in poor condition. I state the facts without going into an explanation of the causes. Meanwhile, the city Institution has not even served its original purpose, inasmuch as *directions have been given not to admit small children, because they were more expensive to keep*. Therefore, the *average age* of those admitted from June to September *was 20 months*, against 9 months of those admitted in October, or 4 or 5 months which has been the average formerly. The Staten Island Grave was so expensive, that no funds were left for the City Nursery. Let Mrs. Du Bois deny that if she dare.

The Country Hospital has been a petted plan of Mrs. Du Bois. The fact of country air being preferable to city dust being sufficiently established, she selected the place in Staten Island, amongst other reasons, firstly because she resides on the Island; secondly, because the place was considered by her to be so very cheap. On May 26th, before the meeting of the Board of Lady Managers, she met Dr. Reynolds and me, at her own request, at the Nursery to induce us to state that it was our positive opinion that the selection of that place in Staten Island was preferable, at the time, to the erection of a quarantine in addition to the city building. The funds in possession of the managers were originally meant to be used for the latter purpose. In the course of the conversation we understood that her intention was firmly settled, that the bargain was closed, and that we were to advise the bargain, and the lady managers were to be served with the medical opinion as a further reason for ratifying the doings

their first directress. Under these circumstances we could but see that our opinion or advice was no longer required : the bargain, however, was closed, and the ap-burying-ground for the babies was secured.

This Country Hospital in St. Louis has proved a complete failure, as I have explained above. The efforts of M<sup>r</sup>. Du Bois' indomitable will and fruitful resources will not give up. It *must* be a success. No deaths *must* occur ; " apparently dying " children *must* recover ; the managers *must* be satisfied ; *Express must* write laudatory articles ; and, on the strength of such articles, the Albany Lobby and Assembly *must* find everything serene, and throw open the Treasury of the people of New York State as before, and more than before. Not enough. She *must* have medical opinions to support her, the position a medical man naturally holds in the eyes of the public entitles him to esteem and his word to belief. The ever-changing house-physicians may prove improper or unwilling tools ; firm and independent characters are dangerous ; avoid therefore the former and expel the latter. Select such who have a " mild disposition, or are dependent upon you. If you cannot compel, coax ; if coaxing is unavailing, use gentle pressure. If truth is insufficient, make them lie. It is not a new saying amongst politicians, that words are given to conceal thoughts and truth, and false statements are the covers of wrong actions. It is a humiliating and disgusting fact, that a physician should have given his consent to those false, intentionally falsified statements, which have been read to you, ladies, and been published over his signature. Neither he nor his mother-in-law will deny the fact of his being aware of the zeal circumstances. But neither will perhaps acknowledge the fact that their standing with their colleagues is hopelessly ruined, until they are told so in just as many plain words.

The final result will be a favorable one for the Institution. As soon as the power of that strong and reckless mind, whom so many either know too little, or fear too much, will be broken, the management of the Nursery will prove more beneficial than heretofore. The immense sums which have been collected for and spent on that " charity," have been wasted on shrouds and coffins. You know after what I have said, that if you left all those children whom you now admit at heavy expense, in their tenements, hovels, and basements, a larger percentage would survive than at present. If a number of influential women like yourself would undertake to work on healthier principles than at present, supported and advised by superior knowledge and experience, less spell-bound by the eyes and tongue of a politician, who has no regards for the rights of her equals, for the holiness of truth, for the dignity of the humane cause in whose interest she professes to work, who makes false statements, and procures false witnesses, if you, or the better part of you, would work in an independent spirit and with the modesty and firmness which results from self-knowledge and good intentions, you would prove a boon to the society in which you live.

finished. It was my  
ore those of pour Bo  
on the necessary p  
ad to turn accuser in nro

read my persona  
nded by insufficient  
ersonal prejudice. I am  
e respect.

Yours very respectfully,

ABRAHAM JACOBI, M. D.

*Professor of Diseases of Children in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, N. Y., Physician to Nursery and Child's, Infant, Mount Sinai and German Hospitals, and the Hebrew Orphan Asylum.*

*Consulting Physician to the North-Eastern Dispensary and Western Dispensary for Women and Children, member of the American Medical Association, the New York Academy of Medicine, Medical Journal Association and Lyceum of Natural History, member (late President) of the N. Y. Obstetrical and N. Y. Pathological Societies, President Elect of the Medical Society of the County of New York, Foreign member of the Obstetrical Society of Berlin, and of the Medical Society of Wuerzburg, and Honorary Member of the N. Y. Medical Forensic, and the Boston, Mass., and the Louisville, Ky., Gynæcological Societies.*



## POSTSCRIPT.

---

The object of this letter has been somewhat foiled. I have not succeeded in making the ladies speak out, but the Medical Board have done so instead. After they had met "informally," some time before, they held a regular meeting, at which I was present, at the house of Dr. Delafield, on Thursday, November 11th. They stated that I had insulted the ladies and the Medical Board, (especially Dr. Hull,) that they had "nothing to do with statistics and charges," but that they had come to declare my place vacant, "in the interest of the institution." Present: Drs. DELAFIELD, BULKLEY, MARKOE, WEIR, HULL, REYNOLDS, ENO, JACOBI.

It was stated that I was malicious and untrue. My statement, that Dr. Hull's report was an invention made for obvious purposes, was refuted by the following: "It was not published at the instigation of Mrs. Du Bois, who had even said, she thought Dr. Hull would not be pleased with its publication,\* but after a motion of Mrs. Anthon's to that effect had been carried unanimously."

I have been declared to be malicious, because the gentlemen have found in my letter a statement that the ladies had transferred the duty of making monthly reports from the house-physician to the attending. The gentlemen assert they made that change themselves, which looks worse yet.

Other "refutations" of my malicious inventions have not come to my knowledge. Finally, while I stand by the truth of the facts concerning the ladies and Dr. Hull, which are the cause of my "expulsion," I admit that three dozen "ladies" and their friends can invent more slanders than I can refute.

110 W. 34th St. NEW YORK, }  
NOVEMBER 18TH, 1870. }

ABRAHAM JACOBI, M. D.

---

\* I do not believe he is.—Dr. J.

